













## The Family Circle.

For the Christian Reflector.

## Lines.

ON THE DEATH OF FRANCIS HOWARD ALDER, AGED FIVE AND A HALF YEARS.

Two sons, to parents dear, one blest

Our cheerful, humble dome;

But one is not—he's now at rest,

High in his heavenly home;

Where all the angels throng,

He sings and prunes evermore.

His Francis gone—for ever fled!

In visions oft he's seen;

We cannot make this loved one dead—

His calm and meekly mien;

His bounding step, his speaking eyes,

Before us daily, hourly rise.

Upon our couch, at dawning light,

When night has sped its way,

He comes, all joyous and bright,

It utters in his way;

When round the sacred altar, where

We bow, he bows and offers prayer.

His thousand tears, in word and song,

Are echoing round our dome;

For school he plies his way along,

And now he's coming home;

He's at my study door—my joy

I start to meet my coming boy.

Now from the sacred desk I view

The pensive, solemn throng;

My child is there, at worship too—

I'm tracing years along;

Alas! the joyous visions turn

Lifeless—I see him in the urn.

Parents bereaved, has every heart

Like ours been made to bleed?

Is there no balm to heal the smart,

No friend in time of need?

Blest him of God! this sorrow share,

Can make us say, 'Thy will be done.'

Parents alone can know the joy

Of rearing children given;

The priceless bliss without alloy,

Is training them for heaven;

Unfolding from the sacred page

Truths God adapted to their age.

One night this child—'Twas not in vain—

Clutched on my knee to cry;

Of Jesus Christ I told him,

Before you bow and pray;

His life, his death, his dying groans,

Were told in solemn, moving tones.

The tears rolled down—with heaving sigh

He asked for me to pray;

That when the Judge of all shall sigh,

He might witness that day;

And with the glorious Saviour rise

To dwell with him above the skies.

Prayer said that time has been his joy,

And oft he'd have his play;

Sweet in tears we've found our boy,

Wishing with us to play;

Alone he'd be with his new stands,

Sweet was the joy before the Lord.

To bow to the Eternal One.

His hands were set—no songster more

Must join the eternal choir;

While lingering on this mortal shore,

His brethren were rising higher;

'Twas heaven he sought, and he was true,

And woe in heaven until you come.

O, what a sad and solemn hour,

When angels bore him hence!

He lives above—Death's last power,

Nor would we call him hence;

An angel now said the thing

Who swell the everlasting song.

With him I've roamed the forest wild,

Who crowded city walks;

The ocean's breeze and taught my child,

White Gold in thunder talked;

Of him whose wisdom shines above,

Below, round, a God of love.

O, blissful thought! we yet may roam

The paradise above;

When all the nations throng our home,

In parter, better love;

'Wait, child, in heaven a few more days,

We'll join in everlasting praise.

North Adams, Dec. 26th, 1844.

## Childhood of Richard Baxter.

Richard Baxter, the English Demosthenes,

thought at one period likely to prove

only a grief to his parents, at last reached

the eminence of a great man. His

father, a pious and industrious man,

was a native of the town of Leominster,

in the county of Hereford. He was

born on the 12th of January, 1615.

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ever taught, learnt the alphabet in a few hours. He was five years old the tenth of February; the next day he began to learn, and so on, till he knew the letters, began at the first chapter of Genesis. He was taught to spell the first verse; then to read it over and over till he could read it off hand without any hesitation; so on to the second, &c., till he took ten verses for a lesson, which he quickly did. Easter fell low that year, and by Whitsuntide he could read a chapter well; for he read continually, and had such a prodigious memory, that I cannot remember ever to have told him the same word twice. What was yet strange, any word he had learned in his lesson, he knew wherever he saw it, either in his Bible or any other book, by which means he learnt very soon to read an English author well.

The same method was observed with them all. As soon as they knew the letters they were first put to spell and read one line; then a verse; never learning till perfect in this lesson, were it shorter or longer. So on, till they were perfect at school time, without any intermission, and before we left the school, each child read what he had learned that morning; and ere we parted in the afternoon, what he had learned that day."—*Recorder.*

## A Hottentot Boy.

A poor black boy, the property of a slaveholder in Africa, having heard of the preaching of the missionaries, felt a strong desire to go and hear about Jesus Christ. For this purpose he crept secretly away one evening, but being obliged to go to the window of the house, his master observed him, and called out, "Where are you going?" The poor fellow came back trembling, and said, "I go to hear the missionaries, massa."

"To hear the missionaries indeed; if you ever go there, you shall have nine-and-thirty lashes, and be put in irons." With a discontented look, the poor boy replied, "I tell massa, I tell the great massa." "Tell the great massa," replied the master: "what do you mean?" "I tell the great massa, the Lord of heaven, that my massa was angry with me, because I wanted to go and hear His word." The master was struck with astonishment, his color changed, and unable to conceal his feelings, he hastily turned away, saying, "Go along and hear the missionaries." Being thus permitted, the poor boy gladly went. In the mean time, the mind of the master became restless and uneasy. He had not been accustomed to think that his slave, a Hottentot, was capable of such actions; and he at length determined to follow his slave, and see if there could be any peace obtained for his troubled spirit. Creeping unobserved into a secret corner he eagerly listened to the words of the missionary, who that day addressed the natives from St. John 2:15. "Layest thou me?" "Is there no poor sinner," said the missionary, "who can answer this question? I not one poor slave, who loves Jesus Christ? no one, who dares to confess Him? Here the poor slave boy, unable to forbear any longer, sprang forward, and holding up both his hands, while the tears streamed down his cheeks, cried out with eagerness, "Yes, massa, I love the Lord Jesus Christ; I do love Him, I love Him, I love Him with all my heart!" The master was still more astonished, and he went home convinced of the blessings which the gospel brings, and became a decided Christian.

## Moralist and Miscellanist.

## The Forget-me-not.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH, BY ROBERT B. BAIRD.

In the year 1809, in the 12th regiment of the line, then stationed at Strasburg, there was a sergeant by the name of Pierre Pitois, who was a native of that half savage, half civilized part of Burgundy, known by the name of *Morvan*, who was called by his comrades *Pierre swallow-rare*. He was a brave fellow, in every sense of the word, and his comrades said, a fellow hard to be cooked.Always the first on the field of battle and the last to leave it, he was supposed to care for two things; the smell of powder and the whistling of balls. Those who had seen eyes, on the field of battle, with such eyes, had been plunged into the thickest of the fight, were accustomed to say that slaughter was the pastime of *Pierre swallow-rare*.

But one fine day, our friend Pierre sent a letter to his colonel, in which he requested permission to leave for a short time, that he might go and nurse his old mother, who was dangerously ill. He added that his poor father, seventy-eight years old, had received a paralytic stroke and was utterly incapable of taking care of his poor wife. He promised to return as soon as his mother's health was restored.

Pierre Pitois did not appeal from this decision.

About a fortnight elapsed, a second letter found its way to the colonel. Pierre announced that his mother had died of sorrow on account of not having seen him once more; she had wished, like a kind and affectionate parent, to give him her last blessing. Pierre solicited earnestly this time for leave of absence for a single month. It was a family secret, he begged his colonel not to refuse him this favor.

Pierre's second letter was not more successful than the first, only the captain said to him, "Pierre, the colonel has received your letter; he is very sorry that your poor mother is dead; but he cannot give you the furlough Strasburg-to-morrow."

Indeed! the regiment leaves Strasburg, and where is it going, if you please?"

To Austria. We are going to Vienna, my brave Pitois. We are going to fight with the Austrians. . . . don't that please you? There you'll have fun, my fine fellow!

Pierre Pitois answered nothing at all this time. He seemed plunged into deep thought. The captain took his hand and shaking it vigorously, said: "Come, wake up! are you deaf to-day? I am telling you that before a week we will have the pleasure of fighting with the Austrians, and you don't even thank me for the good news! Why, you are not listening to me!"

Yes, captain, there is no means of obtaining that furlough?

Are you really mad?—furlough, indeed, on the day before a battle?

Oh, I was not thinking; so we are on the eve of a battle, are we? . . . At such a time, of course, absence is not permitted."

It should not even be asked for!"

True, it should not be asked for,—one would seem to be a coward. Besides, the one that I was requesting, I no longer want, I would do without it."

And you will do well, replied the captain.

The following day the 12th regiment of the line entered Germany. On the same

day, Pierre Pitois, surnamed *swallow-rare*, deserted.

Three months afterwards, while the 12th regiment, after having gathered in a full harvest of glory and honor on the field of Wagram, was making its triumphant entry into Strasburg, Pierre Pitois was ignominiously dragged before his colonel by a brigade of grenadiers.

Ere long a council of war was assembled. Pierre Pitois was accused of having deserted just before his regiment was to have been brought to face the enemy.

This council of war presented a singular spectacle. On one side there was the accuser, who was saying, "Pierre Pitois, you, one of the bravest soldiers of the army, you, whose breast shines the cross of honor; you, who have never deserved either punishment or reproach from your superiors, you could not have left your regiment, and especially have left it on the eve of a battle, without having had a powerful inducement. The council wished to know your motive, for it desires, not to acquit you, for it neither can nor ought to; but at least to recommend you to the clemency of the emperor." On the other hand, the accused replied: "I have deserted without any motive, without any reason, but I do not regret having done so. I was to be executed, I would do it again. I have merited death, condemn me!" Then witnesses came forward, and said, "Pierre Pitois has deserted, we know it!" Others again, "Pierre Pitois is mad; the council cannot condemn a madman; it is not to the gallows, it is to the hospital he should be sent."

Little was wanting for this plan to be adopted, for there was nobody in the whole council, who did not consider the desertion of "Avalot-tout-cre" as one of those human impossibilities which everybody acknowledges, but nobody understands. Yet the accused appeared to be so simple and logical in his reasoning, that the council, in the end, decided that he should be sent to the hospital, and that in the form of the *Forget-me-not*, she had returned to cheer me.

As nothing now bound me to my native village, for my poor father, not long dead, followed me to the tomb, and besides I had got my precious flower, what more did I want? I came to the army and said, "I have deserted, arrest me!"

I am now going to die, and if, as you have assured me, I have a friend in you, I will die without regret, for you will do me the honor of not forgetting me."

The flower, for which I left the army, for which I risked my life, is in this pocket which you see on my breast. Promise me that you will take care that it is not separated from me. It is the little which unites me to my mother, and if I suppose that it was to be broken, oh! I would die without courage. Say, do you promise me to do what I ask?"

I promise you."

O, give me your hand that I may press it to my heart. O, you who are so kind to me, I love you, and if God, by his all-powerful goodness, was to give me a second life, I would consecrate it to your service."

The friends of last night, who were gathered at the place of execution, and the sentence of death had already been read, dull murmurs, and then loud cries, arose along the lines: "The Emperor!—it is the Emperor!—God save the Emperor!"

The Emperor appeared, dismounted from his horse, and with short and rapid steps, walked straight to the condemned man. "Pierre!" said he.

Pierre looked at him; one would have said that he wished to speak, but he was struck with a strange stupor.

Pierre, continued the Emperor, "think of the world of last night, and give me your second life, consecrate it, not to me, but to France! France is also a good and worthy mother! Love her as you loved the other!" He remounted his horse, and left, accompanied by shouts of applause.

A few days afterwards, Pierre, who had become captain of the guard, fell on the field of Waterloo, and mortally wounded, found strength enough to cry out with a firm voice: "God save the Emperor!—God save my country!—God save my mother!"

I have nothing to say to me?"

Nothing."

What! not one adieu for your betrothed or your sister?"

A betrothed!—a sister!—I never had either."

Not for your father?"

My father is no more; he died in my arms two months ago."

Not even for your mother?"

For my mother? exclaimed Pierre, who was now crying, "I never had either. For my mother! Ah, comrade, do not pronounce that name, for, can you believe me, I never heard it, I never said it in my heart, without being moved like a child. Even now, it seems to me, if I were to speak of her—"

I would shed tears, and it is not manly to weep! To weep," continued he with animation, "to weep when I have but a few hours to live. Ah! I would be without courage!"

You are too severe, comrade," said the officer. "I have as much courage as other men, and yet I would not be ashamed to weep when speaking of my mother."

Indeed! said Pierre, seizing the officer's hand with eagerness, "you are a soldier, and you would not be ashamed to weep?"

When I think of my mother? No, indeed! She is so good; she loves me so much, and I love her."

She loves you? you love her?—O, then I will tell you every thing; for my heart is full to overflowing; and, however strange may appear the thoughts which fill my mind, you will not laugh at them, I am sure. Listen, then, for as you were saying a little while ago, he who is dying is happy to have feelings, his secrets; will you then listen to me—will you not laugh at me?"

I am listening, Pierre—who is about to die, can excite nothing but sympathy."

Well, then, said Pierre, "you must know that from the time I came into the world, I have never loved but one person, and that was my mother. But I loved her as no one else can love me. When I was a little boy, I could read in her eyes, and she in mine. I knew her thoughts, she knew mine. To my heart she was a part of myself; I was the same to her. I never had a wife or a sweetheart, I have never had a friend; my mother was my only friend; therefore when I was called upon to become a soldier, when I knew that I was to leave her, I was overcome with despair; and I declared that even if force was employed, I would not leave my mother. With one word, she, who was a good and courageous woman, changed all my resolutions. She said to me, 'My son, must go, I wish it. I tell on my knees before her and said, 'I will go.' Pierre, added she, 'you have always been a good son, and I thank God; but the duties of a son are not the only ones to be attended to; your country calls you—obey! You are going for your news; it is very good.'"

Ah! so you have recovered your senses it?"

So, captain, there is no means of obtaining that furlough?"

Are you really mad?—furlough, indeed, on the day before a battle?"

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day, Pierre Pitois, surnamed *swallow-rare*, deserted. It was a long time before I remembered his last words: "If you love me, do you duty." I was resigned. A short time afterwards I learned that she was dead. . . . Oh, then I lost all command over myself. Let it cost what it might, in spite of everything, I wished to return to the village in which I was born. Whence came this desire so ardent, so irresistible, seeing again the place where my mother had died? I will confess it to you, and as you have a mother whom you love and who loves you, you will understand me.

We country people of Morvan are simple hearted and credulous; we have not the wisdom or education of the dwellers in cities, but we have our creeds which folks call superstition. Superstition, or whatever it be, we have it, and it would be he who could take them from us. Well, one of our opinions which we cling most to, is that which attributes to the first flower which grows on a grave a virtue, such that he who plucks it is certain to forget the dead, and never to be forgotten of them. This is indeed a precious and consoling belief. With it, death is no longer dreadful, it is but a gentle sleep, a repose after a long fatigue.

I wanted to see this flower rise out of the ground; I wanted to pluck it, and to do this I should have to go to the tomb, and to arrive at my mother's grave. The ground seemed still freshly dug, no flower had yet grown there. I waited—six weeks passed, and at the dawn of a beautiful day, I perceived a little flower opening of a sky blue. It was one of those flowers which we country people call, "*Forget-me-not*." When I plucked it, I shed tears of joy, and never to be forgotten of them. This is indeed a precious and consoling belief. With it, death is no longer dreadful, it is but a gentle sleep, a repose after a long fatigue.
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